

Mr. Clifford

THE AMERICAN ART STUDENT

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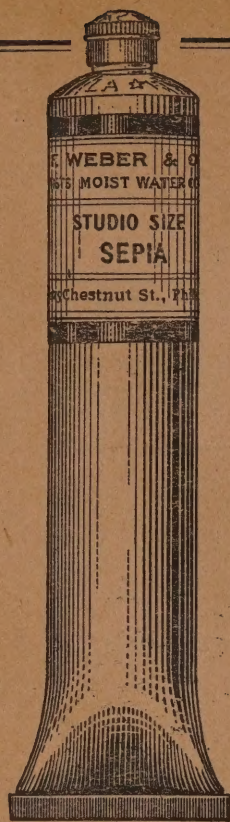
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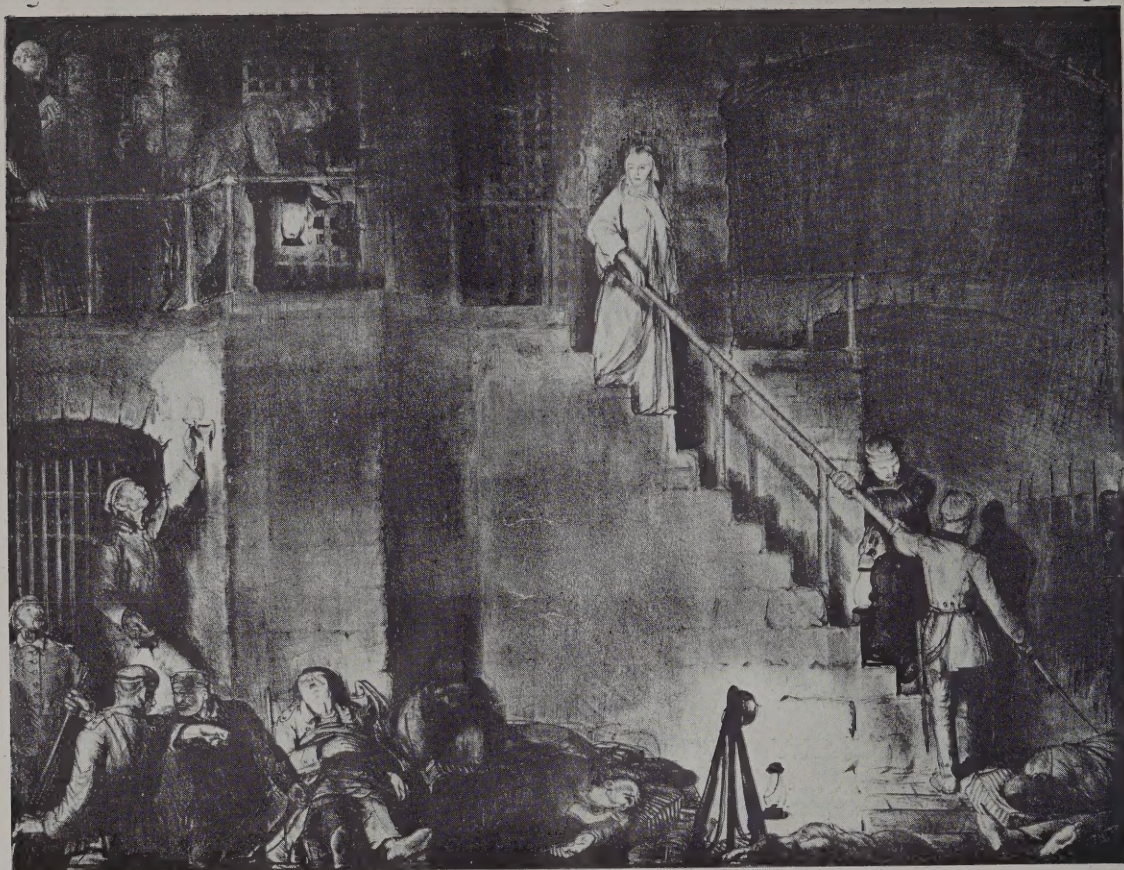
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VOL. III

JUNE, 1921

No. 3

WHAT DYNAMIC SYMMETRY MEANS TO ME

By GEORGE BELLOWES

IN EXPRESSING my views on the study and practice of dynamic symmetry the reader must bear in mind that these are opinions, and as such they are offered.

There is nothing proposed, relating to my art as a painter of pictures, that I will not consider. The fact that a thing is old or has been accepted has become too much a god to almost all men who are termed artists. What it seems to me should interest the art student is exploration, not adaptation. I have no desire to destroy the past. I am deeply

moved by the great works of former times, but I refuse to be limited by them. Convention is a very shallow thing, and I am perfectly willing to override it, if by so doing I am driving at the possibility of a hidden truth. It would seem that all artists should have the same attitude toward their work.

The study of dynamic symmetry is, for instance, probably more valuable than the study of anatomy. It comes within the class of the positive knowledge. It can be learned from Mr. Hambidge's works, now procurable, from a magazine and from a book, "The Greek Vase", both

published by the Yale University Press.

It is a knowledge of Nature, procured from the study of Nature, and it is only an incidental matter that Mr. Hambidge discovered that the ancients were familiar with the law and used it. If an artist is to have any knowledge whatever and use it in his work he wants to know the profoundest and the simplest truths.

The ancients, in using this law of dynamic symmetry, did not use numbers; a string and a stick are the only necessary tools. It is easier for a modern artist to study this subject through the use of numbers because we use numbers quickly and readily, and it entails only the simplest knowledge of elementary geometry.

The Greeks thought art was the graphic expression of philosophy; science

as we know it today was unknown to them at that time. Geometry is the graphic expression of logic; you can't have philosophy without logic.

Its application is still a matter of experiment and will remain a matter of experiment because of its constant growth. It is, among other things, the fundamental law of engineering. It might be called the "law of the constructive armature of living things", and consequently the law of the constructive armature of a work of art, as the artist is trying to give life to space.

The manifestations of the laws of dynamic



GEORGE BELLOWES TEACHING CLASS AT ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

symmetry are as infinite in variety as the manifestations of living forms or combinations possible to music. Recently I heard the Philadelphia Orchestra, directed by Leopold Stokowski. The entire evening of music was nothing but a source of pleasure and enjoyment because at the time my ears were enjoying the strains of great music, my eyes were enjoying the movements and inspired gesture of its great conductor. Every movement of his hands, his arms and his body—every changing expression of his face invoked by the music fitted perfectly into the interpretation of the selection being played; he was literally a fine bit of Greek sculpture in motion.

Nearly all art teaching today is a highly personal affair,—a giving-out by the instructor of his personal knowledge, and it largely results in an imitation of the teacher's work and methods.

Dynamic symmetry is an impersonal, general, universal law. The understanding of its manifestations is a key to knowledge just as mechanics are based on the laws of gravity and of the lever. Knowledge is power,—knowledge gives freedom.

The first thing a student should learn is that all education that amounts to anything is self education. Teachers, college, books—these are only the opportunity for education. They are not education per se.

You do not know what you are able to do until you try. In learning a topic, whether it be painting or any other art—and the practice of

that art is constant learning—try everything that can be done. Try it in every possible way. Be deliberate, and spontaneous. Be thoughtful and painstaking. Be abandoned and impulsive. Learn your own possibilities. There is no impetus I have not followed, no method of technic I am unwilling to try. There is nothing I do not want to know that has to do with life or art.

Inspiration and emotion is the spark which sets man's mind thinking at its keenest pitch. Love for beauty is the spark which causes its creation.

On the other hand, animals have profound emotions. As a work of art is a document of the human mind and spirit, we don't care to see the documents of empty heads or hearts. The work of art should be a document of the wholeness of man, not of one single part.

There are no successful pictures without a geometrical basis. Geometry must be present, either conscious or unconscious.

BY GEORGE BELLOWS, N.A.

In years gone by much talk was heard on "triangulation" and students and artists were told they must have a triangle in their compositions. It is hardly possible to paint any picture without a triangle appearing,—but the limited knowledge, tightened down to the triangle-theory, hurt painting and "tied up" the artists' knowledge. Contrary to the single triangle theory, dynamic symmetry gives a freedom impossible elsewhere.

Many have scoffed at Hambidge's law of



—Courtesy The American Architect
THE STUDIO



EXCAVATING BY NIGHT

BY GEORGE BELLOW, N.A

—Courtesy of The American Architect.

dynamic symmetry as applied to composition. Now, I am not an authority on anything, but I must use what critical judgment I have up to my measure of understanding. Hambidge has shown me a great many things that are profoundly true, and I believe that any serious student or artist who will take the time to study this theory will learn something of great value to himself.

I see no contradictions in Mr. Hambidge's contentions, nor have I ever heard one that holds water. Ever since I met Mr. Hambidge and studied with him I have painted very few pictures without at the same time working on his theory. I believe it to be as profound as the law of the lever or the law of gravitation. No man who practices the arts can, with justice to himself, ignore the research that Hambidge has made. It has never been disapproved, and the artist has but to learn and apply it in his work and thought to have a great and interesting new tool.

If a thing is made easier by technical under-

standing, then by so much is it true that having this particular phase made easier, your strength is conserved for those things which yet remain superbly hard.

ARTICLE ON FIGURE DRAWING BY GEORGE BRIDGMAN

Owing to the crowded condition of this issue of THE AMERICAN ART STUDENT, an important article on figure drawing by George Bridgman which was intended for this number had to be held over.

We are able to announce, however, that instead of a single article by Mr. Bridgman we will be able to print a series of illustrated articles on the subject.

Mr. Bridgman is, without question, the best known authority in this country on constructive anatomy and figure drawing. He is the author of "Constructive Anatomy" and the "Book of a Hundred Hands". Many thousands of students have received instruction from him at the Art Students' League, New York.

INTERESTING AMERICANS IN AMERICAN ART AND ARTISTS

By EGMONT H. ARENS

The retrospective exhibition of American art which opened on May 6th at the Fine Arts Building, 215 W. 57th Street, marks the definite

precious when the millions of her wheels and rubber heels will have been scrapped and forgotten? The answer to these questions has long been deferred, because Americans, so intent with leadership in factory and farm, have chosen to look to Europe for cultural guidance. It will be the endeavor of the Junior Art Patrons to



PAINTING BY ROCKWELL KENT

Shown in Retrospective Exhibition of American Art

inauguration of the society known as "The Junior Art Patrons of America", an association which has been formed to foster in the present and coming generations of Americans a just appreciation of the contemporary art of their land.

It is believed by those who are supporting this movement that the time has come for America to pause and take stock of her spiritual resources, as well as of her material resources, to examine into her standing in the world of the fine arts, and proclaim her cultural riches with no less pride than we have heard extolled her capital wealth.

Is America producing any values more enduring than automobiles, boots, and breakfast foods? Does not her product also include the output of men whose works will be kept and held

make Americans fully cognizant of what fine things their own countrymen have been doing, and to stimulate a national pride in their creative accomplishments.

With this end in view, the present retrospective exhibition had been planned. It is safe to predict that most Americans will be amazed when they see measured for the first time the culminative achievement of American painters and sculptors. From the generation of West, Copley and Stuart to the present time a ponderable number of men have emerged and taken their places among the great artists of the world. The qualities that we have been wont to look for only in the so-called "old masters" are not absent from these American works.

The underlying principles of great art are the

same throughout the ages, and it is one of the purposes of the new society to cultivate a more fundamental understanding and appreciation of those values which inhere in the works of the great masters of the past, values which are alive today, and may be used as a measure to calculate

eyes to the great work of some of our contemporaries.

The new society believes that the quickest and surest method of giving our American artists of the present generation both recognition and support is to buy enough of their art to give them a



PORTRAIT BY ROBERT HENRI

Shown in Retrospective Exhibition of American Art

the stature of the masters of the present and the future. Indeed it is with the masters of the present that the Junior Art Patrons will concern itself the most. For as the masters of the past were recognized and encouraged in their own day, we shall be doing ourselves and our generation a poor service if we do not open our

living, and make it possible for them to continue their creative efforts without hindrance or hardship. Therefore every one who becomes a member of the Junior Art Patrons will be pledged in advance to *spend at least \$25 a year for American art works*. And that is the only qualification for membership!

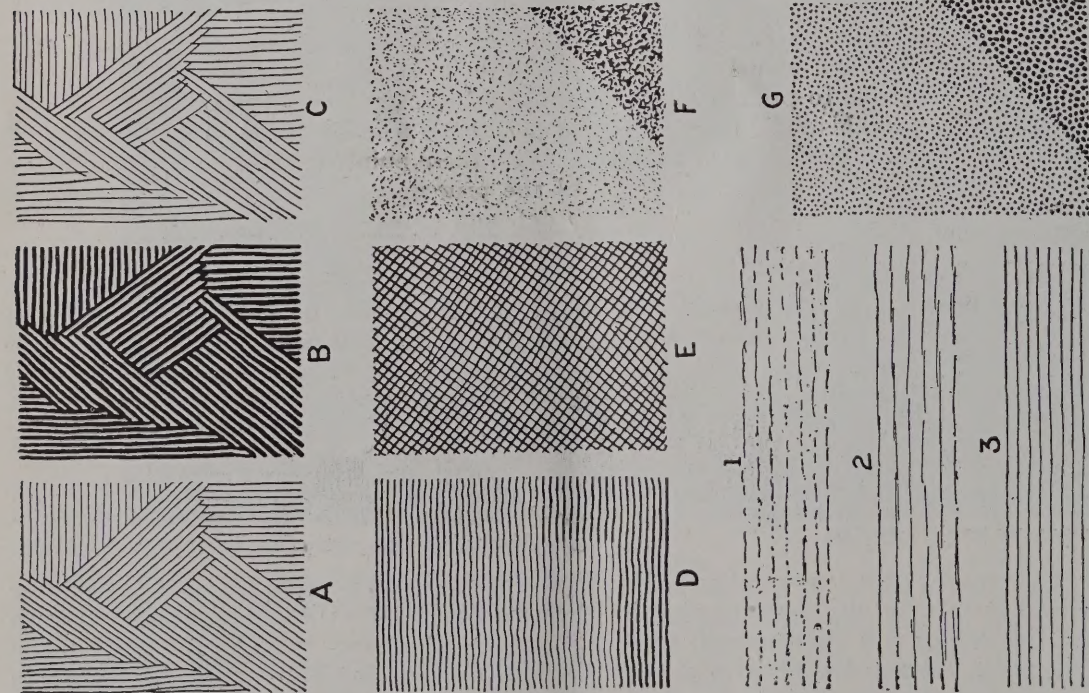


PLATE 8
Pen Techniques

From "TECHNIQUE OF PRACTICAL DRAWING BY EDWARD S. PILLSWORTH

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR DRAWINGS TO BE ENGRAVED

The art director of a big New York advertising agency, with whom I lunched the other day, was telling me of the young artists who bring their portfolios of sample drawings to show him. "A majority of them," he told me, "show me really good stuff, but it won't reproduce."

Young artists need more instruction about engraving requirements in order to make their drawings adaptable for reproduction. A recent book on the *Technique of Practical Drawing*, by Edward S. Pillsworth (published by Macmillan), which contains a fund of practical information about pencil, pen and drawing techniques, devotes an important part of the book to the technical requirements of drawings to be engraved, from which the following paragraphs have been selected:

This process of making engravings from pen-and-ink drawings, has a few requirements which are of great importance to the artist, since he must meet them in his drawing.

Foremost is the fact that the paper he draws upon must be white, and all the work he puts upon this paper, whether line, stipple, or what-not, must be solidly black. It makes little difference what the thickness may be, the camera can reproduce the thin line just as well as the heavy one, but the line must be black. A gray or tinted line will not photograph so as to leave clear glass in the negative, and unless the glass is clear, it will be impossible to print it on the zinc plate. Consequently his ink must be a dead black; writing fluids are not good at all for first-class work, and it is only a waste of time and labor to draw with them. There are many excellent brands of drawing inks to be had, usually retailing at a moderate price.

For the same reason, what is known as a broken or niggly line is barred, because the dragon's blood "top", when printed on zinc, is then too weak to resist etching, and as soon as it gets into the acid bath, the acid begins to "chew" it, with the result that a nasty, irresolute line is formed.

This is shown in 1, 2, and 3 (Plate 8). 1 is a broken line, that will show very weak and unfinished in a cut. The top will be eaten away and broken, all firmness and character will be lost, and the result will be a disappointment in every way, because it will not look at all like the copy. A gray, niggly line may possibly look all right in the drawing, may even fit into it well;

but it never looks well when reproduced. With black printing ink, it is not possible to get the gray look; the line will be black. The engraver has to decide whether it is to come broken as in 1 (in which case it will not look at all like what has been drawn) or whether he will force it into a solid line. If this is done, the line is likely to have an importance in the finished engraving that was never intended.

2 is a scratchy line that is just as bad. It is the sign of the amateur who is not sure of himself, and is usually weak and broken, in addition to being scratchy. Lines of this type usually break away in some places and fill up solid in others, so that, by the time the cut is proved, they look very different from those in the drawing. Such a result is unavoidable, and the engraver must not be blamed. If a good, sharp cut is desired, a good, sharp drawing is necessary; it is not possible to make one from a drawing composed of gray, broken, niggly, or confused lines. Avoid these types always.

3 is the line of the professional artist—firm, even, and solid. No matter how fine it may be, it will photograph well, etch perfectly, and give a character of surety and quality to the drawing. This is the line that should be cultivated, as it carries with it an aspect of knowledge and sureness of purpose. It is firm, solid, clean cut, and perfectly black from one end to the other. The same applies to A, B, and all the other squares of lining on this page in which the lining is as described, and as it must be for good work. The requisites given are for all kinds of pen work, whether lines, stipples, etc.

With these points understood, a consideration of the principal styles of pen work is next in order, and these fall naturally into two parts—lines and stipples.

Line Work. As the most popular and as the style in general use, lines should be considered first. They fall naturally into two kinds—loose lining and regular lining. Loose lining is a style wherein the movement of the hand and fingers is largely automatic; it is drawn quickly, and with no great effort made to keep the lines equidistant, though a practiced artist will instinctively draw them fairly even. C (Plate 3) shows a square of loose lining, simply drawn by moving the fingers and hand back and forth over the paper. More pressure on the pen will, of course, make a heavier line; less pressure, a lighter one. This is the same method as in writing, a heavy pressure spreads the point of the pen and makes a darker line.

D shows a square of regular lines, which is drawn in a very different manner from C. The direction of every line is carefully watched, and the lines are "drawn"; that is, they are directed with precision to keep them the same distance apart and the same depth of color. The lines should be mechanically perfect in direction, thickness, and separation. When a darker tone is required, as at the bottom, make the lines thicker; for a slightly lighter, make them thin-

ner or farther apart. It will be noticed that there is a slight gradation of tone in the square.

E shows a square of lines crossed by other lines. This is known as crosshatching, and is sometimes used for the purpose of darkening a tone already laid down.

Crosshatching is seldom seen any more, except for certain special uses or to add a little variety of technique to a drawing.

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DEPARTMENT
OF SCULPTURE
Awards made
at the judg-
ment of May
2, 1921.

Jurors—

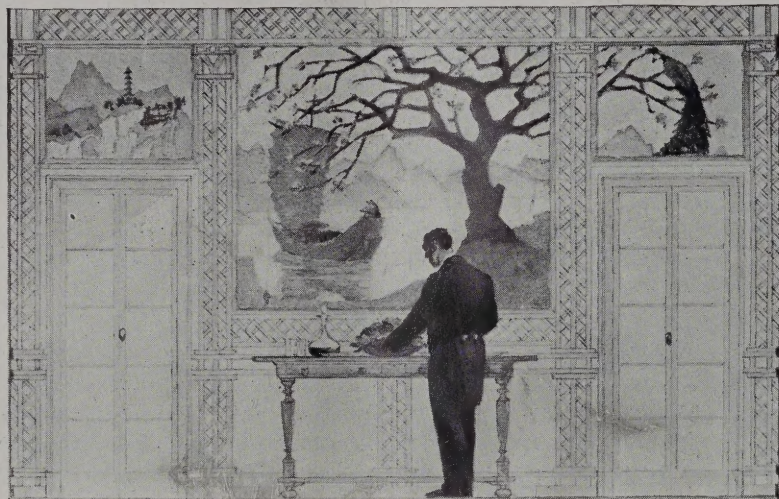
Messrs. Robert
G. Eberhard,
Anthony De
Francisci, Leo
Lentelli, Lloyd
Warren, John
Gregory, Har-
ry R. Ludeke,
Edward Mc-
Cartan, George

J. Lober, F. Lynn Jenkins, Henry R. Sedgwick,
Raymond M. Hood, J. E. Renier.

*Monthly Exercise in Composition No. 8. Sub-
ject, "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse."*
Fifteen models submitted, 13 B. A. I. D. 2
Yale School of the Fine Arts.

Second medal,
G. E. Tolent-
tino, L. Wors-
wick; first
mention, A.
Drosin, P.
Herzel; second
mention, J.
Nicolosi, J.
Ruhl, A. And-
riole, F. P. De
Luna.

*Life Model-
ing Classes —*
Mr. Robert G.
Eberhard's
Class—Second
Medal, A. T.

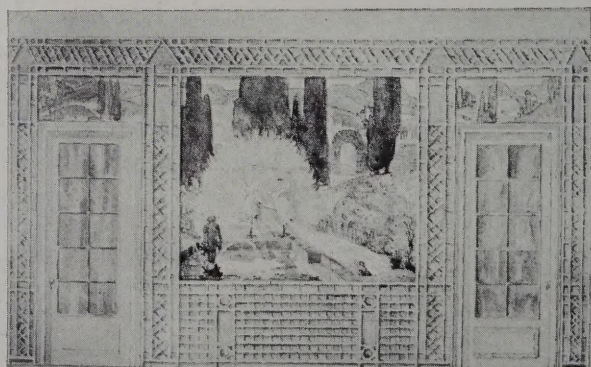


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BY L. MELLICHAMPE

Stewart; first mention, F. C. Fischer, E. Shwab, P. G. Vagis; second mention, T. Mellilo. Mr. Anthony De Francisci's Class—First mention, F. V. Kelly, T. Mellilo; second mention, A. Block M. J. Daly. Mr. Leo Lentelli's Class—Second medal, L. Slobotkin, P. Herzel; first mention, A. Drosin; second mention, P. G. Vagis.

Architectural Ornament—Mr. Harry R. Ludeke's Class in Italian Renaissance Ornament—Second medal, C. M. Chambellan, S. D'Angelo, S. Santore; second mention, A. Novenski, C. Geraci, V. Mancini, J. Bonano, I. Crisafulli.

Nature Study (drawing)—Second mention, A. Frati (3), S. D'Angelo (2), V. Mancini, S. Santore.

DEPARTMENT OF MURAL PAINTING: Awards made at the judgment of May 3, 1921.

Jurors — Messrs. Lloyd Warren, Henry R. Rittenberg, Ivan Olinsky, Joseph Lauber.

Monthly Exercise in Composition No. 8. Subject, "An Outdoor Room." Nineteen sketches submitted.

First medal, Hildreth Meiere; second medal, L. Melli-champe, Ruth H. Vinson, "Atelier" Denver. Yale School of the Fine Arts—First mention, Earl H.



FOUR HORSEMEN OF THE APOCALYPSE
BY L. WORSWICK Second Medal



FOUR HORSEMEN OF THE APOCALYPSE
BY G. TOLENTINO Second Medal

Smith, Tom L. Johnson; second mention, A. G. Shea, F. Smith Beatrice Kendall, Odile A. Schenker, M. J. Mueller.

First mention—Nora E. Cook, "Atelier" Denver.

First mention — C. P. Helck, G. Jacobs; second mention, L. Thoron.

DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR DECORATION: Awards made at the judgment of April 19, 1921.

Jurors—Messrs. René T. de Quélin, H. Oothout Milliken, Lloyd Warren.

Problem in Elements V: Subject, "The Bed in Several Styles." One design submitted. First mention, S. D. Laughlin, B. A. I. D. Atelier.

Projet V: Subject, "A Stair Hall in a City Residence." Three designs submitted. First mention, E. Johnson, E. Schiffert, B. A. I. D. Atelier.

A CORRECTION:

A reproduction of a design for "A Private Ball Room" by Edward Schiffert, which was reproduced in our May issue, was designated as the work of a student of the Minneapolis School of Art. Mr. Schiffert, however, is a student of the Beaux-arts Institute of design, and we take this opportunity to make the correction.

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KERAMIC DEPARTMENT

Edited by FRANZ NEUSCHAFER

(This department has been created for amateur china painters because of the renewed interest that is being shown in Ceramics. Readers are invited to send inquiries to the Ceramic Editor, and the answers will be published here.)

This following encouraging letter was fortunately received in time for publication in the present issue:

DEAR EDITOR:

Your columns give me great pleasure as they contain much valuable information During the years I have painted china I have received much happiness from my work but have always felt that something was lacking. In observing the work among Oil and Water Color artists I note new methods, styles and changes always taking place. It seems that we china painters are behind the times for in the branches just mentioned there is hardly a classification in which the artists are not always looking for and applying new methods. Other than the conventional work there has hardly been an appreciable or interesting change other than accomplished through slow process spanning a period of years. What I more long for is some excitement by way of radically new methods and styles. Why does not some one discover a new method of painting so as to be able to say it is entirely different from the old-fashioned methods which we have always used. Why not write something along these lines in order to stimulate to greater efforts through new channels permitting more interesting results.

Yours very truly,

We repeat that this letter is encouraging for it shows that the artist realizes that the field is unlimited, and also understands the danger of falling into a rut. It requires only a little stretching of the imagination to rouse from the drowsy state and to realize the possibilities in our work, carrying china painting to a front seat. We believe that no mistake is made when we say that almost any china painter feels the same as our correspondent but unfortunately other china painters do not take the trouble to voice their feelings.

It is true that excepting for changes in styles of decoration or shapes of pieces there has been little new, nor has there been much improvement in materials or methods employed. About

twenty-five or thirty years ago the jewel decoration mentioned in our last issue could hardly be called a new method but would be considered more a fad. At about the same time as this style of decoration was done the colors were put up in tubes ground in oil and are used to a considerable extent in that state today. It was then, hardly, a departure from usual methods when colors were put up in powder state and sold to the artists in vials to be mixed on the palette.

It is merely transferring the work of mixing from manufacturer to artist. Due to inexperience, considerable loss is incurred when more color is mixed than work on hand requires, nor can same consistency always be obtained. In this case the tube state offers the advantage, but still there is the objection that at all times turpentine and oils are required, the use of which to many is not only disagreeable but injurious.

Centuries ago the old masters who worked under conditions which made it necessary for them to manufacture their own colors found more desirable results obtainable through under painting first with colors prepared to permit application on canvas with water as the medium after which work was painted over with oil color. Today this same result is at once obtainable through the use of a scientifically prepared set of colors which are applicable to canvas, paper or any surface prepared or unprepared in which the effects of not only water color but also of oil color even to the heaviest impasto may be obtained without the use of one drop of oil. These colors were first offered to the artists about forty years ago and at the same time a valuable contribution was given to china painting through the perfection of a line of colors and gold which are applicable to china, glass or pottery without the use of any medium other than water. The usual rules for mixing and firing apply as when using tube oil, or vial powder colors, the use of water being the only difference. Their simplicity in use and similarity to regular shades make their discussion here unnecessary but any information desired may be secured from us on application.

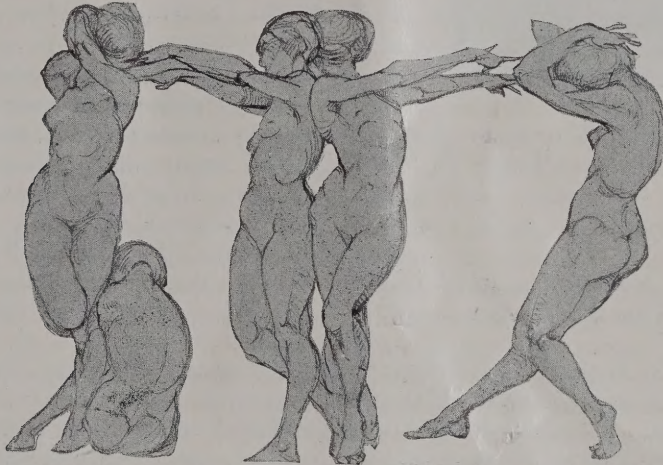
Necessity being the mother of invention the most original ideas in painting come from the artist as a result of his work, and we therefore are glad to receive communications of the above kind permitting discussion, the result of which will prove valuable. Many brilliant thoughts in the creative mind of the artist, otherwise

wasted, would prove a great benefit if but written down and sent to us to be put in print and communicated to others.

It is, of course, impossible to print in these columns all communications received in the issue following date of receipt. Reply, however, will be sent and space for their publication given at the earliest opportunity. Reply will be made direct to communications in advance of their publication.

Q. Please tell me how china painting brushes are best cleaned. I wash mine in turpentine which is the only way I know of but I find that the next day or later the hair seems to become brittle and breaks.

A. Brushes should be cleaned first in turpentine, then washed with soap and water and afterwards rinsed in clear water. Washing removes the possibility of injurious effects of the turpentine which makes the hair brittle.



DRAWING MADE IN MR. BRIDGMAN'S CLASS AT ART STUDENTS' LEAGUE BY EDNA COTTER

THUMB-NAIL SKETCHES OF ARTISTS WHO TEACH

By CATHERINE BEACH ELY

(Students who have received instruction in classes under Bridgman, Young, or Bellows will appreciate the accuracy of the following little thumb sketches. We are glad to receive occasionally manuscripts such as this one, and welcome any similar sketches from art students.—EDITOR.)

Madeleine and I were lounging in front of the open fire in her Fifty-fifth Street studio. The studio was austere furnished with a few good old colonial pieces. None of Madeleine's work was on view, and very little of anybody's work. A shapely jar held sprays of dogwood; through half-drawn shades showed the lavender haze of a New York twilight.

Madeleine is doing well in her specialty—portrait sketches which are quaint and characteristic. Most of her sitters are children. She lives by her brush.

She was responsive to my questions about her opinion as to the best art training. "As you know, I was conservative enough to believe in laying a foundation of work—not to say drudgery. I did not yearn to inflict upon a defenseless public the expression of my own individuality, until that individuality had been tempered by the restraint which comes from knowledge and good taste. That is the reason I started with the Antique Class at the Art League. I should do it again the same way."

"You worked under Bridgman, didn't you?"

"I toiled and suffered under the immortal Bridgman, immortal as a teacher, but none the less an artist in human material; that is if the human material doesn't weaken under the knife. Without warning, Bridgman was wont to sweep through the class, leaving us as flat as a field of grain after a hurricane has passed over it. Working under such a powerful personality was a tussle, but it was worth while, for he could teach the teachable to draw. Of course, not even a genius can teach the unteachable any—



Drawing made in Mr. Young's Class at Art Students' League.
By Dorothy Varian.

thing. Moreover he was so impartial in his blustering, that his fierce moods had a certain wholesome tang.

"Between Bridgman Antique and Bridgman Life, I sandwiched in a summer under Mahonri Young at the League. Although some of us knew that he disapproved of us, because we had been bowing at Antique all year (antique seemed to be his *bête-noir*), yet he forced himself to give even us careful instruction in his theories of art. From Bridgman we had gotten the first principles of construction and solid draughtsmanship. Mahonri Young made our little charcoal puppets move; he scourged us into the habit of rapid sketching; every morning a new pose with plenty of punch, and with action the more exaggerated the better. He drove home the truth that was in him not by Bridgman's robust methods, but by a suppressed acerbity which contrasted oddly with his plump exterior *de bonhomme*.

"Then came a winter of portrait sketching in chalk under Bellows (chalk was my choice, not his. I wanted to make beginning experiments with a less difficult medium than oil paints.). It was Bellows' first year at the League and he seemed not yet quite to have taken his bearings. He meandered in a gentle maze about the classroom, clad in a long linen smock, smoking many cigarettes and discoursing Philosophy. Occasionally he might recollect himself and give some student a criticism. At times he would ask for a canvas and a palette, and would paint the

whole morning, we students in a cluster about him, watching him place his beautiful fat colors (he painted with a full, luscious brush). He was a big fellow, but gentle as a kitten. From Bellows we learned design—how to place a subject upon the canvas—how to balance this with that. We also inhaled the effluvia of big work; we experienced his robust, inquisitive talent in full action, and caught something of its vitality."

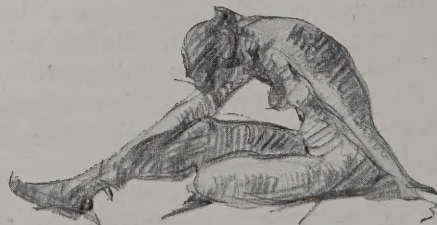
"Didn't you leave the League the following year?" I asked.

"Yes, I wanted a change from overcrowded classes and decided to work the next winter in a small, private studio under a woman's instruction.

"Men teachers are incalculable as the weather, which seems to produce a good art atmosphere. Miss A., conscientious, amiable, and a capable artist, nearly drove me to drink. She used to pour at one dose all the vials of her art-knowledge upon my swimming brain, until I gasped for breath. I would fall to with the intention of working out some of these theorems, but just as I was pursuing some gleam of comprehension around the corner of my mind, up she would rush, again drenching her dazed pupil with bucketfuls of instruction. After a few months of this I escaped and worked at home the rest of the year. But from Miss A. I had at least learned the rudiments of mixing oil paints and laying them on.

"The following year I entered Mr. Clinton Peters' private class. This cosmopolitan artist bound into a sheaf the wisdom I had gleaned from his predecessors."

"You seem to have had a varied art diet," I observed. As she rolled the tea table to the light, Madeleine answered, "'One man's poison may be another man's meat'—each student must know himself well enough to choose the art nourishment he needs."



Drawing made in Mr. Bridgman's Class at Art Students' League.
By John Husheer.

MATERIALS THE ARTIST USES

(This department is edited by H. E. Martini, who will answer in this section of "The American Art Student", any inquiries regarding the composition, technical properties and application of painting mediums, pigments and grounds. Address inquiries to Technical Editor, Care "American Art Student".)

Before proceeding to a consideration of the new additions to the list of mediums and pigments which the classical period brought with it, I will bring to your attention a few other results of investigation of the Egyptian period because these reveal an important fact. This may be said to be the painstaking way each part of the picture was constructed from the laying of the ground to the last finishing touch. Each part was prepared as a suitable surface for the superimposed layer. This point, I must say even now, I feel will be repeated again and again for nothing insures permanence like thoroughness and care in every detail of the painting process.

It is not necessarily indicated by the foregoing paragraph that we must prepare our own grounds and materials but rather that in our relentless rushing we must not disregard the laws of chemistry and physics. We must not expect that a varnish can be mixed with the colors in painting to save us the time occupied in varnishing the picture some five to six months hence, when most of the colors are supposed to have become dry.

An English writer on artists' material, A. P. Laurie, examined a mummy case supposed to be the work of an artisan of the nineteenth dynasty. The white gesso ground had been painted a solid black over which a design in yellow ochre was applied. Over the whole a reddish colored varnish had been laid.

This varnish dissolved easily in alcohol, showing it to be a spirit varnish. It must be understood that all varnishes are resins dissolved in a suitable medium, the origin of this resin being the exudation of a gum from a tree. Some of these gums are mined, being remains of old buried forests. Examples of resins of this kind are Kauri, Amber and the harder Copals.

Gums oozing from living trees such as the cherry, larch and pine give rise to softer gums.

Oil varnishes consist in dissolving the harder resins in a drying oil by means of heat while spirit varnishes are solutions of softer resins in volatile oils, as turpentine and petroleum, or in alcohol. An oil does not dry in the ordinary

sense of the word but oxidizes. In other words, it absorbs oxygen from the air, forming a chemical compound. A spirit varnish leaves a thin coat of the resin distributed over the surface after the solvent has evaporated.

The subject of varnishes is very important and will be taken up later at the proper time when their effect on the permanence of pigments and their more extended use through better knowledge of their properties became better known and were more highly prized.

Returning to the examination of the fragment by A. P. Laurie, he found that the reddish varnish was soluble in spirit. No solvents such as turpentine, alcohol or petroleum being known he assumes the varnish to have been applied warm to make it more fluid and that it was a fresh, soft gum from a live tree. The reddish color of the varnish was due to dragon's blood.

This latter was a resin which came from India. Its peculiar name was derived from the stories related as hearsay by the traders who brought it from the East. The story is that the dragon and elephant engaged each other in mortal combat in which both succumbed, the massive body of the elephant crushing the dragon. The blood pressed from his body coagulated and dried in the ground and there it was found. This tale is repeated as an example of the general scientific ignorance and superstition of the times.

Having recorded the above facts, I will take up the mediums and methods of encaustic painting as practiced by the Greek and Roman artists. The writings of this time to which we can refer are chiefly those of Pliny whose Natural History was in the nature of an encyclopedia because it covered every imaginable subject. There are also several other writers whose names I will mention so that if any one desires more detailed information than is given in the limited space of these paragraphs, he may read translations of their works available at most libraries. These writers are Vitruvius, Dioscorides and Aëtius.

Pliny discusses two schools of painting. The rather casual mention of one leads us to believe that they used the size and egg binding medium very much in the same manner as it was used in the Egyptian period. The other used beeswax or a mixture of this with tar to knit the color particles together and hold them to the ground. This method is called encaustic painting.

The origin is found in the method described by Pliny for the decoration of ships. Branches and twigs of a resinous tree were piled over a

smouldering fire and the whole covered so as to exclude most of the air and retain the heat. The tarry matter was boiled out of the branches and twigs and collected. Even though this was of black-brownish color sufficiently bright pigments would lend a definite color to it.

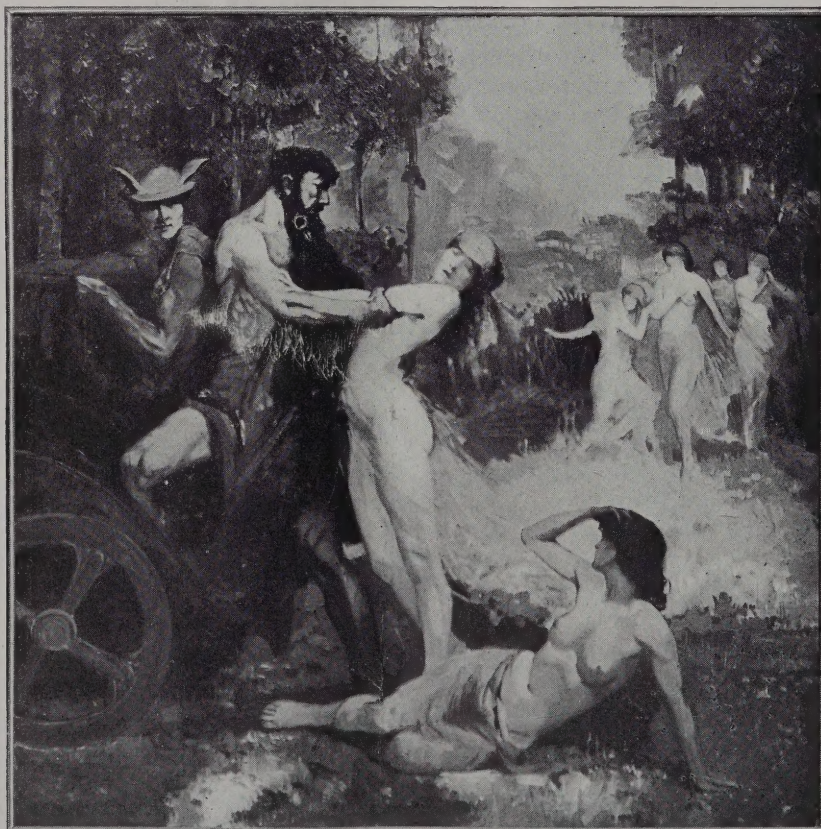
A step further was taken by adding beeswax to this to make the binder lighter in color and tougher. The ingenuity of some artisan must have led him at this point to the abandonment of the tar entirely because of the lighter color of the wax.

The process of applying this beeswax color resolved itself into two techniques. One of these consisted in mixing the pigment up with the hot, fluid wax and applying it with the brush; the other consisted of making crayons or sticks of the ingredients and modeling these by means of a hot tool called the cauterium on the picture surface.

It was one of the customs at this time to use a portrait of the deceased as a decoration on the coffin. Most of these were painted in the

encaustic technique. A number of such pictures have been found intact. Their artistic values, however, vary greatly for the medium wealthy class were unable to pay for work comparable with that which the very rich could command.

There are many drawbacks and difficulties which confront one regarding this technique, because of the rapidity with which wax hardens when it strikes a cold surface, but practice soon overcomes these. Mr. Garrett whose enthusiasm really brought the AMERICAN ART STUDENT to life experimented with this technique. Several well-known artists especially in England have made some very successful pictures with wax as a binder. By means of careful manipulation of the painting over an even source of heat the ground may be kept at a sufficient temperature so that immediate setting of the wax is obviated and the colors become properly annealed to the surface. With the dexterity gained in applying wax in batiking many of us might make quite a success of a wax painting. When the wax and ground have cooled thor-



PAINTED BY STUDENT OF ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO.

oughly a soft cloth can be used with moderate friction to give the surface a slight polish producing in the finished picture somewhat the appearance of oil.

I mentioned the reason for the assumption that the other method used for panel pictures was the egg-size binding medium. It is quite plain that a technique so generally known and handed down from generation to generation needed no special mention because of its obviousness. On the contrary the wax method was something new and therefore engaged the writer's special attention thus making the description quite detailed. There is one particular passage in Pliny which enumerates the characteristics of different waxes as also means for bleaching these through repeated heatings, washings with the salt water from the sea and drying the wax in the sun and moonlight.

There is only one important matter in reference to the other painting method of which mention was made. This is the varnishing of these pictures. The varnish used was not a very clear one for Pliny says that the colors were subdued in tone by it. It mainly had the advantage of protecting the painted surfaces from the dust and other injurious influences. The exact nature of this varnish and its application are debatable questions. Some authorities hold that it was a form of bitumen or asphalt thinned down considerably with a crude distillate of petroleum.

The pigments used in this period were the simple ones described as having been identified by the chemical analysis of fragments from Egyptian tombs, mummy cases and other existing ancient works of art. In addition to these colors we find the umbers which are similar to the ochres but owe their characteristic shade to the presence of manganese. Another important earth, terre verte (green earth) is likewise a clay colored by the presence of iron compounds.

The preparation of earth colors nowadays is done much in the same manner as the earlier times. After the earths had been mined and graded according to color they were ground between two stones to a fine powder. Finer grinding was then attained by mixing water with the colors. Finally the color was agitated in large tubs with clean water. After a few minutes the water was carefully decanted carrying only the very fine particles of color with it. The coarser grains, settling much quicker because of their weight, remained behind on the bottom of the first tub. This is known as floating or levigating. Evaporation of the decanted



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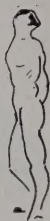
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thus restricting the palette usable in admixtures with this pigment.

water was the final step to obtain the pigment in usable form for the various techniques. Other pigments used for the first time and identified with the Greek and Roman period will be described in the next paper.

* * *

LITHOPONE

A few days ago an American painter whose acquaintance I had made abroad stopped me on the street and after we had spoken about his work and a number of other things we came to the discussion of lithopone. His query in reference to this pigment was prefaced by the statement that many artists were using this now in preference to either zinc or lead whites.

"Tell me what is it and what do you think of using it?"

There has always been great activity on the part of chemists to produce a white which is inexpensive, have better hiding power than zinc, is not so dangerous to manufacture or use as the poisonous lead white and would not become brittle as zinc does, especially when ground in oil. The product meeting such requirements was to be used rather for interior and exterior protective house painting than by the artist. I mean to infer that it seems of greater importance, especially commercially, to think of new things for practical rather than artistic painting. One of the results along this line was the invention of lithopone by John B. Orr of England about 1880.

A mixture of solutions of zinc sulphate and barium sulphide produce by double decomposition a precipitate of zinc sulphide and barium sulphate, the latter more familiar to us as blanc fixe or barytes. The precipitate was not at all a satisfactory pigment for it lacked body and covering quality. Orr discovered that the precipitate heated to dull redness then suddenly chilled by plunging into cold water produced a product whose color and body were quite satisfactory. A closer study of the reaction, especially on a manufacturing basis, brought the color up to a very high standard.

The commercial value of lithopones depends on their zinc sulphide content which determines their hiding power and are graded accordingly, the distinguishing marks being red, green and white seals, representing percentage variations from 15 to 33 per cent. zinc sulphide. Many of these grades are on the market under fancy names such as New White, Ponolith, Beckton White, Marbon White, Orr's White, Jersey Lily White, Charlton White, and so on.

It has been discovered that light turns lithopone gray, this disappearing again when placed in the dark for some time. A chemistry student at Cornell named O'Brien was intrusted with the study of this change. His observations brought to light the following facts as the reasons. The action of the sunlight is photogenic reducing part of the zinc sulphide to zinc and liberating hydrogen sulphide. Zinc is familiar to most of us as a grayish metal.

Lithopone was considered superior to lead white because it was not affected by sulphur gases. But, weighed against this is the fact that the action of light or acidity in a binding medium liberate hydrogen sulphide which forms black compounds with copper and lead colors

Lithopone is distinguished from lead or zinc whites by the following simple test. A drop of hydrochloric acid is put on the dry powder, or the pigment washed clean of the gum binder with water or oil binder with a volatile solvent, and immediately effervescence takes place with the evolution of hydrogen sulphide, a gas having the disagreeable odor of bad eggs.

On the whole the evidence does not recommend this pigment highly for the artist's palette for really good, permanent work. It might find a place in students' colors because of its cheapness but should even then be properly labeled so that in case a change takes place in a study you know what you used. I wish to emphasize this point for often the name of a pigment which is good is on the label of a questionable one.

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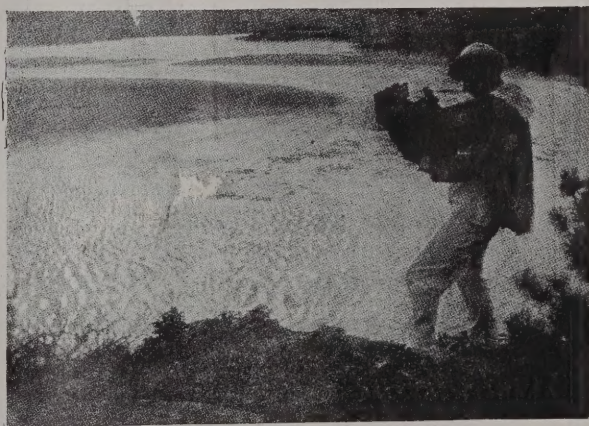
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Posters by Stultz, Winslow, and Twiggs, which were awarded prizes in the Oleo Competition conducted last year by the Carnegie Institute of Technology, occupy a place of honor. In the same group are posters by Vic Davy, Selma Derry, Martha Levy, F. S. Beattie, R. G. Twiggs, Art Knorr, Harriette Hyde, Imogene Smith, and Catherine Eiseman.

Jane Peterson of New York is represented by three paintings—"Docks at Edgerton", "Old Mill" and "Gloucester Waterfront". Alice Seipp and Tora Borjeson Wilberforce, also of the same state, exhibit illustrations.

Among the paintings handled in water color, tempera, and representative oil color styles are the following: "Blossoming Hills," "Old Spanish Garden," "In the Patio," by De Neale Morgan, Cal.; "Battle in Clouds," by Richard Veenfliet, N. J.; "Flower Garden," M. H. Hadley, Conn.; "Old Man," by Ralph S. Tebbutt, Ohio; "Storm," by Mrs. Carrie Schultz, Iowa; "Moonlight" and "Evening", by Zuida B. Maxwell, Penna.; "After Storm," by E. B. Chase, Mass.; "Rapids," by M. E. Peteler, N. J.; "Roses" and "Beach", by Ida Wells Stroud, N. J.; "Dutch Mill," by George Volkmar, N. Y.; "Michigan Birch," by M. L. Dougherty, Mich.; "Landscape and Trees," by Laura Swabey, Ind.; and other paintings by Cosimo de Salvo, N. Y.; F. Califano, N. J.; William Lycette, Pa.; Emma L. Payne, Ohio; Marie Willard, N. Y.; William S. Rice, Cal.;



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Some of the posters are by the following artists: Mary Cornwell, Sophie Isaacs, Thomas Graham, E. Flanagan, Thomas Johnson, Russell Peters Askue, Catherine Carpenter, E. Busch, William P. Stranahan, Margaret Toenfeldt, William Cromwell, Jr., Lem Palmer, Eudora Hunner, Ernst Zeitlinger, S. A. Ward, C. S. Bredin, I. W. Dasche, L. A. Homeyer, Elgin Russell, M. Newhall, G. Freis, John Z. Reilcovins, L. J. Ammon, A. Stuart Wilcox, L. J. Mann, Adele Mowton, John E. Miller, Esther Silber, E. Allan Muller, and George E. Lancieux.

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surface of the picture. Some painters, the great Turner included, have combined other methods with oil painting, thinking this necessary to obtain their effects.

But the beginner in Landscape should go out to Nature with the aim of copying faithfully, in solid tints, some simply piece of foreground; something, in fact, which is but a step beyond a Still Life group as regards difficulty of form. He will have all the perplexity of dealing with a diffused light, and it will require some practice to get into the way of painting out of doors.

After doing this foreground study he may next try a simple landscape effect on a gray day, when there are no strong and changing contrasts of sunlight and shadow to puzzle him.

He will have to paint from his point of view, and his tint-matching with the knife will be much curtailed; but his previous practice should have given him the power to match with some degree of truth without using the knife.

He can thus go on from a simple subject to one more difficult, and in time will have a power and a pleasure of which no human being can rob him.

He should not trust to empirical recipes for the mixing of tints, but by faithful and persistent trials in tint-matching obtain a practical knowledge of the means of expression such as no other method can give.

The student should also cultivate his memory. Some of the most beautiful effects in Landscape are very fleeting. The memory is best exercised by making notes of any beautiful evanescent effect at the moment, and afterwards painting it in the quiet of the painting room. Continued practice will give the memory much power. Some of the greatest landscape-painters, including our own Turner, followed constantly this improving practice.

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By CLARENCE H. WHITE

Among the big features of the July issue will be an illustrated article on photography by Clarence H. White, who has done more perhaps than any other American to combine photography with the fine arts.

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